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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1205
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RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 7593
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 2939
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 5634
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 6732
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 3407
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 0052
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA PRIORITY 4893
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2498
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 3778
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KATHMANDU 001164

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: NEPAL: MAOISTS ALLOW PARLIAMENT TO REOPEN

REF: A. KATHMANDU 01152
[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 01147

Classified By: Charge d' Affaires, a.i., Randy W. Berry. Reasons 1.4 (b /d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: The United Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M) ended its nationwide general strike on December 22, but said political negotiations are increasingly difficult because the other parties are "puppets" of India. As an act of "good faith" and to spur negotiations, the Maoists unilaterally decided to stop blocking Parliament, which has not met regularly since May 2009. Senior Maoist leader Mahara told Charge December 23 that extremists in the other parties are gaining ground. Mahara promised to investigate the attack on a USAID contractor's office during the strike. End Summary.

Shutdown Over, Shifting Focus to India

[1](#)2. (C) In a December 23 meeting with Charge, Maoist foreign affairs director Krishna Bahadur Mahara said the Maoists are planning "phase four" of their agitation. The details have not been decided, but it will culminate with an "indefinite nationwide shutdown" beginning January 24, if the other political parties refuse to accede to Maoist demands. As a unilateral act of "good faith," Mahara said the Maoists would stop their protests in Parliament and allow it to operate unimpeded. (Note: Parliament reopened on December 23.) India is the true power behind the current government, Mahara claimed, and any negotiations with the other parties should take place through India.

[1](#)3. (C) Charge stated the reopening of Parliament would be viewed as a constructive step, but stressed that the Maoist strikes hurt the same Nepali people that the Maoists purport to represent. Charge expressed concern that the Maoists had lost the ability to control their cadres during protests, citing the violent attack on a Nepali policeman on December [1](#)20. The general population joins the protests not because they support the Maoists but because they fear retribution. Mahara said the Maoist leaders were "discussing how bandhs affect the poor and looking at ways to minimize this affect," and promised to pass along the U.S. opinion during discussions.

USAID Office Attack

¶4. (C) Charge protested the attack against the office of a USAID partner, Winrock International, in Surkhet where Maoist supporters caused approximately \$1,000 in damage (ref A). Mahara said he would investigate the incident and said the Maoists punish those involved. Charge noted that those who commit crimes should be held accountable through Nepal's legal system--not through parallel systems of party punishment.

Extremists Gaining Ground

¶5. (C) "Anti-Maoist" extremists in the Nepali Congress (NC) and Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist (UML) parties now have the upper hand, Mahara said, and are blocking progress on the peace process or a new constitution. In contrast, the Maoist party is united, and has "never deviated" from the position that the peace process and the constitution must be finished quickly.

Still Want Off the Terrorist Lists

¶6. (C) Charge reiterated that for the past 18 months the United States has waited for the Maoists to fulfill the requirements necessary for removal from the U.S. "terrorist lists." Charge told Mahara that we would present Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" with a written list of the terrorist benchmarks. Mahara thought this would be a positive step and promised to "take it up with Prachanda and ask for action."

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Comment

¶7. (C) The Maoists appear to be pursuing a two-track approach. On the one hand, they are offering an olive branch by allowing Parliament to reopen and unilaterally deciding to discharge of the disqualified combatants (ref B). On the other hand, the threat of indefinite strikes looms large and Maoist anti-India rhetoric has increased. This may reflect a carefully balanced Maoist strategy or divisions within the party. With other political parties emboldened by India's support, political agreement is unlikely in the short-term. In typical Nepali style, we predict that neither side will feel pressure to take negotiations seriously until the January 24 Maoist deadline approaches.
BERRY